

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 966 without my signature.

This bill requires the State Water Resources Control Board and the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal EPA) to work within existing state law to coordinate with state, federal, and international partners on California-Mexican border water quality issues. This bill is unnecessary because it gives no additional authority to any agency or board. However, by mandating specific activities and timeframes it will create additional requirements and costs to the state.

Mexico is an extremely important economic and cultural partner to California. Our proximity and shared history unite us. The annual Border Governors Conference provides a cooperative forum for discussing complex and important cross-border issues including water quality and the environment. Water quality continues to be an important topic in the work groups for the Border Governors.

Additionally, in order to increase coordination and elevate the importance of border environmental issues, this year's budget transferred the California-Mexico border program from the State Water Resources Control Board to Cal EPA. This will allow Cal EPA to take an active leadership role managing environmental programs for the border region and coordinating individual boards and department's activities.

These ongoing administration activities embody our State's commitment to border environmental issues.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger